IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Joshua REITER

Serial No. 09/678,850

Filed: October 4, 2000

For: INTERACTIVE PROCESS FOR
    APPLYING OR PRINTING
    INFORMATION ON LETTERS OR
    PARCELS

) Atty. Docket: REITE0004
) Confirmation No.: 5969
)
) Group Art Unit: 3629
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) Examiner: Edward R. COSIMANO
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) Date: January 6, 2004
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APPEAL BRIEF

MAIL STOP APPEAL BRIEF-PATENTS
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Applicant respectfully submits this Appeal Brief under 37 C.F.R. § 1.192 with respect

to the above captioned application. The present Appeal Brief addresses and responds to all

outstanding issues set forth in the Final Office Action dated May 6, 2003.

Real Party in Interest

The real party of interest is the inventor, Joshua Reiter.

Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no related appeals or interferences with respect to the above captioned

application.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-50 are pending. Claims 1-50 are appealed. A copy of the appealed claims is also provided in Appendix A attached herewith.

The following claims 1-50 are under appeal:

1. (Original) A method for operating a system for preparing letters and parcels for shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the method comprising steps for:

(a) identifying recipient data associated with a letter or parcel;

(b) determining if there is a match between the recipient data and the data in the database;

(c) when a match is determined, applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels; and

(d) updating the database to reflect the results of step (c).

2. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the method further comprises:

(e) when no match is determined, applying non-targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels.

3. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said step (c) comprises applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels by printing the targeted information.

4. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein step (c) comprises applying the targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels by attaching a label or removable coupon.

5. (Previously amended) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

(e)   calculating a specific delivery charge based on said recipient data, recording said specific delivery charge associated with the one of the letters and parcels and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

6. (Original) A method for operating a system for preparing letters and parcels for shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the method comprising steps for:

(a)   identifying sender data associated with a letter or parcel;

(b)   determining if there is a match between the sender data and the data in the database;

(c)   when a match is determined, applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels; and

(d)   updating the database to reflect the results of step (c).

7. (Original) The method as recited in claim 6, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the method further comprises:

(e)   when no match is determined, applying non-targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels.

8. (Original) The method as recited in claim 6, wherein said step (c) comprises applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels by printing the targeted information.

9. (Original) The method as recited in claim 6, wherein step (c) comprises applying the targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels by attaching a label or removable coupon.

10. (Previously amended) The method as recited in claim 6, further comprising:

(e) calculating a specific delivery charge based on said sender data, recording said specific delivery charge associated with the one of the letters and parcels and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

11. (Original) A method for operating a system for preparing letters and parcels for shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the method comprising steps for:

(a) identifying sender data and recipient data associated with one of the letters and parcels;

(b) determining if there is a match between at least one of the sender data and the data in the database and the recipient data and the data in the database;

(c) when a match is determined, applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels; and

(d) updating the database to reflect the results of step (c).

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12. (Original) The method as recited in claim 11, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the method further comprises:

(e)   when no match is determined, applying non-targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels.

13. (Original) The method as recited in claim 11, wherein said step (c) comprises applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels by printing the targeted information.

14. (Original) The method as recited in claim 11, wherein step (c) comprises applying the targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels by attaching a label or removable coupon.

15. (Previously amended) The method as recited in claim 11, further comprising:

(e)   calculating a specific delivery charge based on said sender data and said recipient data, recording said specific delivery charge associated with the one of the letters and parcels and applying the postage.

16. (Original) A system for generating labels for letters and parcels prior to shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the system comprising:

first means for identifying recipient data associated with one of the letter and parcels;

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second means for determining if there is a match between the recipient data and the data in the database;

third means for generating a targeted label including targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels when a match is determined;

fourth means, operatively connecting said third means to the database, for updating the database following operation of said third means; and

fifth means for calculating a specific delivery charge based on said recipient data, recording said specific delivery charge associated with the one of the letters and parcels in the database and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

17. (Original) The system as recited in claim 16, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the system further comprises:

sixth means for generating a label including non-targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels when no match is determined.

18. (Original) A method for operating a system generating labels for letters and parcels prior to shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the method comprising steps for:

(a) identifying sender data associated with one of the letters and parcels;

(b) determining if there is a match between the sender data and the data in the database;

(c) when a match is determined, generating a label including targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels;

(d)   updating the database to reflect the results of step (c); and

(e)   calculating a specific delivery charge based on said sender data, recording said specific delivery charge associated with the one of the letters and parcels and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

19.   (Original)   The method as recited in claim 18, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the method further comprises:

(f)   when no match is determined, generating a label including non-targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels.

20.   (Original)   A method for operating a system generating labels for letters and parcels prior to shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the method comprising steps for:

(a)   identifying recipient data associated with one of the letters and parcels;

(b)   determining if there is a match between the recipient data and the data in the database;

(c)   when a match is determined, generating a label including targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels;

(d)   updating the database to reflect the results of step (c); and

(e)   calculating a specific delivery charge based on said recipient data, recording said specific delivery charge associated with the one of the letters and parcels and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

21. (Original) The method as recited in claim 20, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the method further comprises:

(f) when no match is determined, generating a label including non-targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels.

22. (Original) A system for generating labels for letters and parcels prior to shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the system comprising:

first means for identifying sender data associated with one of the letters and parcels;

second means for determining if there is a match between the sender data and the data in the database;

third means for generating a label including targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels when a match is determined;

fourth means, operatively connecting said third means to the database, for updating the database following operation of said third means; and

fifth means for calculating a specific delivery charge based on said sender data associated with the one of the letters and parcels and recording said specific delivery charge in the database and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

23. (Original) The system as recited in claim 22, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the system further comprises:

sixth means for generating a label including non-targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels when no match is determined.

24. (Original) A system for generating labels for letters and parcels prior to shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the system comprising:

first means for identifying sender data and/or recipient data associated with one of the letters and parcels;

second means for determining if there is a match between the sender data and/or recipient data and the data in the database;

third means for generating a label including targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels when a match is determined;

fourth means, operatively connecting said third means to the database, for updating the database following operation of said third means; and

fifth means for calculating a specific delivery charge based on said sender data and/or recipient data associated with the one of the letters and parcels and recording said specific delivery charge in the database and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

25. (Original) The system as recited in claim 24, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the system further comprises:

sixth means for generating a label including non-targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels when no match is determined.

26. (Original) A process for handling mail comprising the steps of:

(a)   providing a database having data and targeted information therein;

(b)   identifying sender data associated with a piece of mail;

(c)   comparing the sender data with the data in the database to determine if there is a match;

(d)   if there is a match, applying targeted information to the piece of mail; and

(e)   updating the database to reflect the results of step (c).

27. (Original)   The process according to claim 26, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the process further comprises, after step (c), if there is no match, the step of applying non-targeted information to the piece of mail.

28. (Original)   The process according to claim 27, wherein said database further comprises non-application data of senders on whose mail information is not to be applied, and wherein said step (d) is skipped, when there is a match with non-application data.

29. (Original) The process according to claim 26, further comprising the step, after said step (b) of calculating postage based on said sender data and applying postage data to said piece of mail.

30. (Original) A process for handling mail comprising the steps of:

(a)   providing a database having data and targeted information therein;

(b)   identifying recipient data associated with a piece of mail;

(c)   comparing the recipient data with the data in the database to determine if there is a match;

(d)   if there is a match, applying targeted information to the piece of mail; and

(e)   updating the database to reflect the results of step (c).

31.   (Original)   The process according to claim 30, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the process further comprises, after step (c), if there is no match, the step of applying non-targeted information to the piece of mail.

32.   (Original)   The process according to claim 31, wherein said database further comprises non-application data of recipients on whose mail information is not to be applied, and wherein said step (d) is skipped, when there is a match with non-application data.

33. (Original) The process according to claim 30, further comprising the step of reading sender data from the piece of mail, and wherein step (c) further comprises comparing sender data with data in the database to determine whether there is a match.

34.   (Original)   The process according to claim 33, wherein said database further comprises non-application data of senders and/or recipients on whose mail information is not to be applied, and wherein said step (d) is skipped, when there is a match with non-application data.

35. (Original) The process according to claim 30, further comprising the step, after said step (b) of calculating postage based on said recipient data and applying postage data to said piece of mail.

36. (Original) The process according to claim 33, wherein said database further comprises non-application data of senders on whose mail information is not to be applied, and wherein said step (d) is skipped, when there is a match with non-application data.

37. (Original) The process according to claim 30, wherein step (d) comprises printing targeted information on said piece of mail.

38. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 30, wherein step (d) comprises attaching a removable coupon to said piece of mail.

39. (Original) The process according to claim 33, further comprising the step, after said step (b) of calculating postage based on said recipient and/or sender data and applying postage data to said piece of mail.

40. (Original) A postage handling system, comprising:

_ an identifying device, for identifying recipient data from a piece of mail;

a memory device containing a database, operationally connected to said processor, wherein said database contains data and targeted information;

a processor for processing data, operationally connected to the identifying device and the memory device; and

an applicator device for applying targeted information to the piece of mail upon instructions from the processor;

wherein the processor is programmed to compare recipient data identified from the piece of mail with data in the database, to instruct the applicator device to apply targeted information to the piece of mail when the recipient data matches the data in the data base, and to update the data in the database with a result of the comparison of recipient data with data in the database.

41. (Original) The system according to claim 40, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and said processor is further programmed to apply non-targeted information to the piece of mail when there is no match between the recipient data and the data in the database.

42. (Original) The system according to claim 41, wherein said data base further comprises non-application data of recipients on whose mail information is not to be applied, and wherein said processor is programmed not to instruct said applicator device to apply targeted information to said piece of mail when there is a match between recipient data and non-application data.

43. (Original) The system according to claim 40, wherein said processor is further programmed to calculate postage based on said recipient data, and to instruct said applicator device to apply a postage indication to said piece of mail.

44. (Original) The system according to claim 40, wherein said identifying device further identifies sender data from said piece of mail, and said processor is further programmed to compare sender data with data in the database, and to instruct the applicator device to apply targeted information to the piece of mail when the sender data matches the data in the data base, and to update the data in the database with a result of the comparison of sender data with data in the database.

45. (Original) The system according to claim 44, wherein said data base further comprises non-application data of recipients on whose mail information is not to be applied, and wherein said processor is programmed not to instruct said applicator device to apply targeted information to said piece of mail when there is a match between recipient data and non-application data.

46. (Original) The system according to claim 40, wherein said applicator device is a printer.

47. (Original) The system according to claim 40, wherein said applicator device is a device for attaching a removable label.

48. (Original) The system according to claim 44, wherein said processor is further programmed to calculate postage based on said recipient data and/or sender data, and to instruct said applicator device to apply a postage indication to said piece of mail.

49. (Original) A postage handling system, comprising:

an identifying device, for identifying sender data from a piece of mail;

— a memory device containing a database, operationally connected to said processor, wherein said database contains data and targeted information;

a processor for processing data, operationally connected to the identifying device and the memory device; and

an applicator device for applying targeted information to the piece of mail upon instructions from the processor;

wherein the processor is programmed to compare sender data identified from the piece of mail with data in the database, to instruct the applicator device to apply targeted information to the piece of mail when the sender data matches the data in the data base, and to update the data in the database with a result of the comparison of sender data with data in the database.

50. (Previously amended) The system according to claim 49, wherein said processor is further programmed to calculate postage based on said sender data, and to instruct said applicator device to apply a postage indication to said piece of mail.

Status of Amendments

Response (C), filed February 11, 2003, has not been fully considered and Response (D) After Final, filed May 20, 2003, has not been considered. Supplemental Amendment (E) After Final, filed August 21, 2003, has not been entered by the Examiner. Although entrance

of the above amendments would put the claims in better condition for appeal, the amendments are not necessary for any argument presented in this appeal.

Summary of the Invention

The present invention pertains generally to an interactive process for handling mail, specifically for applying or printing information on letters or parcels (specification, page 1, lines 9-10). In particular, the embodiment of claim 1 recites a method for operating a system for preparing letters and parcels for shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the method comprising steps for: (a) identifying recipient data associated with a letter or parcel; (b) determining if there is a match between the recipient data and the data in the database; (c) when a match is determined, applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels; and (d) updating the database to reflect the results of step (c). See specification, page 7, line 14, to page 8, line 24, and Figure 1. Independent claims 6, 11, 18, 20, 26, and 30 recite various other method embodiments in accordance with the present invention.

The embodiments recited in independent claims 16, 22, 24, 40 and 49 recite various apparatus embodiments in accordance with the present invention.

The advantages of the method embodiments and apparatus embodiments in accordance with the present invention include providing users of letter and parcel distribution systems with methods and apparatuses for generating advertising revenues useful in subsidizing mailing and shipping costs. The methods in accordance with the present invention identify recipient and/or sender data from a letter or parcel, then matches the recipient and/or sender data to targeted information, such as customer specific advertisements,

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which can be placed on the letter or parcel (specification, page 3, line 10-19). The apparatus embodiments in accordance with the present invention provide devices for performing the steps in the various method embodiments.

Issue on Appeal

There is only a single issue presented for review on the appeal.

Does the timely-filed terminal disclaimer with regard to U.S. Patent 5,819,241, render moot the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-50 under the judicially created doctrine of obvious-type double patenting over claims 1-20 of U.S. Patent 5,819,241?

Grouping of Claims

There is one group of claims:

Group I: claims 1-50.

Applicant's Arguments

1. __The timely-filed terminal disclaimer with regard to U.S. Patent 5,819,241 renders moot the rejection of claims 1-50 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-20 of U.S. Patent 5,819,241.__

The Federal courts have ruled that, under 37 C.F.R. § 1.321(b), a properly filed terminal disclaimer overcomes a rejection under the judicially created obvious-type double patenting doctrine. In re Van Ornum, 214 U.S.P.Q. 761, 770 (C.C.P.A. 1982).
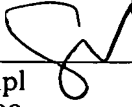
In the present case, the only rejection standing against claims 1-50 is the judicially created obvious-type double patenting rejection over claims 1-20 of U.S. Patent 5,891,241, which was made in the Office Action dated December 31, 2002, page 2, lines 11-16. In response to the December 31st Office Action, Applicant submitted a proper terminal disclaimer that was in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.321 on February 11, 2003 (See Exhibit A). The Examiner did not consider this terminal disclaimer, through no fault of Applicant, but rather because it apparently became separated from the file. The Examiner issued a Final Office Action, dated May 6, 2003, and repeated the obvious-type double patenting rejection (Final Office Action, May 6, 2003, page 2, lines 11-15). In response to the Final Office Action, Applicant re-filed the proper terminal disclaimer, with respect to U.S. Patent 5,891,241, on May 20, 2003 (See Exhibit B).

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The terminal disclaimer with respect to U.S. Patent 5,891,241 filed on February 11, 2003, and again on May 20, 2003, complies with 37 C.F.R. § 1.321 and overcomes the obvious-type double patenting rejection presently standing against the claims. Because there are no other rejections pending against the claims of the present application, claims 1-50 are allowable, and confirmation of allowability is respectfully requested on appeal.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX (A)

1. (Original) A method for operating a system for preparing letters and parcels for shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the method comprising steps for:

(a) identifying recipient data associated with a letter or parcel;

(b) determining if there is a match between the recipient data and the data in the database;

(c) when a match is determined, applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels; and

(d) updating the database to reflect the results of step (c).

2. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the method further comprises:

(e) when no match is determined, applying non-targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels.

3. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said step (c) comprises applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels by printing the targeted information.

4. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein step (c) comprises applying the targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels by attaching a label or removable coupon.

5. (Previously amended) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

(e)   calculating a specific delivery charge based on said recipient data, recording said specific delivery charge associated with the one of the letters and parcels and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

6. (Original) A method for operating a system for preparing letters and parcels for shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the method comprising steps for:

(a)   identifying sender data associated with a letter or parcel;

(b)   determining if there is a match between the sender data and the data in the database;

(c)   when a match is determined, applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels; and

(d)   updating the database to reflect the results of step (c).

7. (Original) The method as recited in claim 6, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the method further comprises:

(e)   when no match is determined, applying non-targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels.

8. (Original) The method as recited in claim 6, wherein said step (c) comprises applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels by printing the targeted information.

9. (Original) The method as recited in claim 6, wherein step (c) comprises applying the targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels by attaching a label or removable coupon.

10. (Previously amended) The method as recited in claim 6, further comprising:

(e)   calculating a specific delivery charge based on said sender data, recording said specific delivery charge associated with the one of the letters and parcels and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

11. (Original) A method for operating a system for preparing letters and parcels for shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the method comprising steps for:

(a)   identifying sender data and recipient data associated with one of the letters and parcels;

(b)   determining if there is a match between at least one of the sender data and the data in the database and the recipient data and the data in the database;

(c)   when a match is determined, applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels; and

(d)   updating the database to reflect the results of step (c).

12. (Original) The method as recited in claim 11, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the method further comprises:

(e)   when no match is determined, applying non-targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels.

13. (Original) —The method as recited in claim 11, wherein said step (c) comprises applying targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels by printing the targeted information.

14. (Original) The method as recited in claim 11, wherein step (c) comprises applying the targeted information to the one of the letters and parcels by attaching a label or removable coupon.

15. (Previously amended) The method as recited in claim 11, further comprising:

(e)   calculating a specific delivery charge based on said sender data and said recipient data, recording said specific delivery charge associated with the one of the letters and parcels and applying the postage.

16. (Original) A system for generating labels for letters and parcels prior to shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the system comprising:

    first means for identifying recipient data associated with one of the letter and parcels;

    second means for determining if there is a match between the recipient data and the data in the database;

third means for generating a targeted label including targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels when a match is determined;

fourth means, operatively connecting said third means to the database, for updating the database following operation of said third means; and

fifth means for calculating a specific delivery charge based on said recipient data, recording said specific delivery charge associated with the one of the letters and parcels in the database and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

17. (Original) The system as recited in claim 16, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the system further comprises:

sixth means for generating a label including non-targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels when no match is determined.

18. (Original) A method for operating a system generating labels for letters and parcels prior to shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the method comprising steps for:

(a)   identifying sender data associated with one of the letters and parcels;

(b)   determining if there is a match between the sender data and the data in the database;

(c)   when a match is determined, generating a label including targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels;

(d)   updating the database to reflect the results of step (c); and

(e)   calculating a specific delivery charge based on said sender data, recording said specific delivery charge associated with the one of the letters and parcels and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

19.   (Original)   The method as recited in claim 18, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the method further comprises:

(f)   when no match is determined, generating a label including non-targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels.

20.   (Original)   A method for operating a system generating labels for letters and parcels prior to shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the method comprising steps for:

(a)   identifying recipient data associated with one of the letters and parcels;

(b)   determining if there is a match between the recipient data and the data in the database;

(c)   when a match is determined, generating a label including targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels;

(d)   updating the database to reflect the results of step (c); and

(e)   calculating a specific delivery charge based on said recipient data, recording said specific delivery charge associated with the one of the letters and parcels and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

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21. (Original) The method as recited in claim 20, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the method further comprises:

(f) when no match is determined, generating a label including non-targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels.

22. (Original) A system for generating labels for letters and parcels prior to shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the system comprising:

first means for identifying sender data associated with one of the letters and parcels;

second means for determining if there is a match between the sender data and the data in the database;

third means for generating a label including targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels when a match is determined;

fourth means, operatively connecting said third means to the database, for updating the database following operation of said third means; and

fifth means for calculating a specific delivery charge based on said sender data associated with the one of the letters and parcels and recording said specific delivery charge in the database and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

23. (Original) The system as recited in claim 22, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the system further comprises:

sixth means for generating a label including non-targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels when no match is determined.

24. (Original) A system for generating labels for letters and parcels prior to shipment, the system having a database having data, targeted information and delivery charges stored therein, the system comprising:

first means for identifying sender data and/or recipient data associated with one of the letters and parcels;

second means for determining if there is a match between the sender data and/or recipient data and the data in the database;

third means for generating a label including targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels when a match is determined;

fourth means, operatively connecting said third means to the database, for updating the database following operation of said third means; and

fifth means for calculating a specific delivery charge based on said sender data and/or recipient data associated with the one of the letters and parcels and recording said specific delivery charge in the database and applying the delivery charge to the one of the letters and parcels.

25. (Original) The system as recited in claim 24, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the system further comprises:

sixth means for generating a label including non-targeted information for the one of the letters and parcels when no match is determined.

26. (Original) A process for handling mail comprising the steps of:

(a)   providing a database having data and targeted information therein;

(b)   identifying sender data associated with a piece of mail;

— (c)   comparing the sender data with the data in the database to determine if there is a
match;

(d)   if there is a match, applying targeted information to the piece of mail; and

(e)   updating the database to reflect the results of step (c).

27.   (Original)   The process according to claim 26, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the process further comprises, after step (c), if there is no match, the step of applying non-targeted information to the piece of mail.

28.   (Original)   The process according to claim 27, wherein said database further comprises non-application data of senders on whose mail information is not to be applied, and wherein said step (d) is skipped, when there is a match with non-application data.

29. (Original) The process according to claim 26, further comprising the step, after said step (b) of calculating postage based on said sender data and applying postage data to said piece of mail.

30. (Original) A process for handling mail comprising the steps of:

(a)   providing a database having data and targeted information therein;

(b)   identifying recipient data associated with a piece of mail;

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(c)   comparing the recipient data with the data in the database to determine if there is a match;

(d)   if there is a match, applying targeted information to the piece of mail; and

(e)   --updating the database to reflect the results of step (c).   --

31.   (Original)   The process according to claim 30, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and wherein the process further comprises, after step (c), if there is no match, the step of applying non-targeted information to the piece of mail.

32.   (Original)   The process according to claim 31, wherein said database further comprises non-application data of recipients on whose mail information is not to be applied, and wherein said step (d) is skipped, when there is a match with non-application data.

33. (Original) The process according to claim 30, further comprising the step of reading sender data from the piece of mail, and wherein step (c) further comprises comparing sender data with data in the database to determine whether there is a match.

34.   (Original)   The process according to claim 33, wherein said database further comprises non-application data of senders and/or recipients on whose mail information is not to be applied, and wherein said step (d) is skipped, when there is a match with non-application data.

35. (Original) The process according to claim 30, further comprising the step, after said step (b) of calculating postage based on said recipient data and applying postage data to said piece of mail.

36. (Original) The process according to claim 33, wherein said database further comprises non-application data of senders on whose mail information is not to be applied, and wherein said step (d) is skipped, when there is a match with non-application data.

37. (Original) The process according to claim 30, wherein step (d) comprises printing targeted information on said piece of mail.

38. (Previously amended) The process according to claim 30, wherein step (d) comprises attaching a removable coupon to said piece of mail.

39. (Original) The process according to claim 33, further comprising the step, after said step (b) of calculating postage based on said recipient and/or sender data and applying postage data to said piece of mail.

40. (Original) A postage handling system, comprising:

an identifying device, for identifying recipient data from a piece of mail;

a memory device containing a database, operationally connected to said processor, wherein said database contains data and targeted information;

a processor for processing data, operationally connected to the identifying device and the memory device; and

an applicator device for applying targeted information to the piece of mail upon instructions from the processor;

wherein the processor is programmed to compare recipient data identified from the piece of mail with data in the database, to instruct the applicator device to apply targeted information to the piece of mail when the recipient data matches the data in the data base, and to update the data in the database with a result of the comparison of recipient data with data in the database.

41. (Original) The system according to claim 40, wherein said database further comprises non-targeted information, and said processor is further programmed to apply non-targeted information to the piece of mail when there is no match between the recipient data and the data in the database.

42. (Original) The system according to claim 41, wherein said data base further comprises non-application data of recipients on whose mail information is not to be applied, and wherein said processor is programmed not to instruct said applicator device to apply targeted information to said piece of mail when there is a match between recipient data and non-application data.

43. (Original) The system according to claim 40, wherein said processor is further programmed to calculate postage based on said recipient data, and to instruct said applicator device to apply a postage indication to said piece of mail.

44. (Original) The system according to claim 40, wherein said identifying device further identifies sender data from said piece of mail, and said processor is further programmed to compare sender data with data in the database, and to instruct the applicator device to apply targeted information to the piece of mail when the sender data matches the data in the data base, and to update the data in the database with a result of the comparison of sender data with data in the database.

45. (Original) The system according to claim 44, wherein said data base further comprises non-application data of recipients on whose mail information is not to be applied, and wherein said processor is programmed not to instruct said applicator device to apply targeted information to said piece of mail when there is a match between recipient data and non-application data.

46. (Original) The system according to claim 40, wherein said applicator device is a printer.

47. (Original) The system according to claim 40, wherein said applicator device is a device for attaching a removable label.

48. (Original) The system according to claim 44, wherein said processor is further programmed to calculate postage based on said recipient data and/or sender data, and to instruct said applicator device to apply a postage indication to said piece of mail.

49. (Original) A postage handling system, comprising:

an identifying device, for identifying sender data from a piece of mail;

a memory device containing a database, operationally connected to said processor, wherein said database contains data and targeted information;

a processor for processing data, operationally connected to the identifying device and the memory device; and

an applicator device for applying targeted information to the piece of mail upon instructions from the processor;

wherein the processor is programmed to compare sender data identified from the piece of mail with data in the database, to instruct the applicator device to apply targeted information to the piece of mail when the sender data matches the data in the data base, and to update the data in the database with a result of the comparison of sender data with data in the database.

50. (Previously amended) The system according to claim 49, wherein said processor is further programmed to calculate postage based on said sender data, and to instruct said applicator device to apply a postage indication to said piece of mail.